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ABSTRACT

Supervisory roles perceived by teachers as the most influential in affecting their behavior with respect to the content, processes, or outcomes of their teaching were those of principal; "other teachers"; program consultant; inspector; assistant or vice-principal; area, district, or regional superintendent; and resource teacher. This report deals with the number and percent of teachers identifying each role as influential and the relationship of type and size of school, sex, grade level taught, experience, and professional preparation of teachers to teachers' perceptions of the influence of 26 different supervisory roles. Perceptions of influence ranked the principal as having the most influential supervisory role; "other teachers" as influencing the behavior of beginning teachers; program consultants and inspectors as most influential (by certain female teachers); vice-principals as most influential (by public, city school teachers with two to three years professional training and teaching of intermediate grades in medium or large size schools); the area superintendent as most influential (by certain county female teachers teaching in large schools); and resource teachers as most influential (by teachers at the primary and junior grade levels). (Author/DN)

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THE INFLUENCE OF SUPERVISORY ROLES

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THE INFLUENCE OF SUPERVISORY ROLES

A recent study of supervision in school systems in Canada was concerned with discovering the styles and behaviors of effective supervisors whose influence, teachers felt, served to improve the content, processes, and outcomes of their teaching.[1] To discover these behaviors it was first necessary to identify the supervisory roles which teachers perceived to be influential. The following report deals with these perceived influential roles rather than with the broader question of effective supervisory styles and behaviors.

An influential role had been defined as one where the supervisor in it was perceived by the teacher to be affecting or influencing the teacher's behavior with respect to the content, processes, or outcomes of the teacher's work in the school or classroom. Teachers participating in the study had been asked to carefully examine twenty-six possible supervisory roles in the school or school system and to identify whether the supervisor in each role influenced their teaching behavior. This report deals with the number and per cent of teachers identifying each role as influential and the relationship of type and size of school, sex, grade level taught, experience and professional preparation of teachers to teachers' perceptions of roles as influential.

The influence of each role by all teachers responding

The accompanying table ranks by number and per cent of all teachers responding the influence of the twenty-six roles considered in the study. The principal was rated as the most influential. Over 93 per cent or 519 of the 556 teachers responding perceived this role as affecting their teaching behavior. The second most influential role was that of 'other teachers' identified as influential by some 63 per cent of the teachers responding. The other five roles identified as influential by at least 50 per cent of the teachers were those of program consultant, inspector, assistant or vice-principal, area, district or regional superintendent and resource teacher.

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1. Parsons, G. Llewellyn, "Teacher Perceptions of Supervisory Effectiveness: An Analysis of Supervisory Roles in School Systems," Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Toronto, 1971.

The Relationships Between School and Teacher Variables and Teachers' Perceptions of the Influence of Each Role

The data were analyzed to discover the relationships among type and size of school, sex, grade level taught, experience and professional preparation of teachers and teachers' perceptions of the influence of the seven most influential roles identified above. The results are as follows:

(1) The Principal

The principal was identified as influential by 519 of the 556 teachers reporting. There were no significant differences in ratings of this role by different groups of teachers.

(2) Other Teachers

Nearly sixty-three per cent or 513 of the total number of teachers in the sample identified 'other teachers' as influencing them in their behavior as a teacher. The only factor significantly related to teachers' perception of the influence of 'other teachers' was teaching experience. Beginning teachers perceived 'other teachers' to be more influential than did more experienced teachers.

(3) Program Consultant

The number of teachers identifying the program consultant as influential was 339 which was 61 per cent of the total or 75.5 per cent of the 449 cases where the role applied. The factors found to be related to the perceptions of the influence of the program consultant were grade level taught and sex of teacher. When teaching experience was controlled, it was found that public school teachers of three to ten years experience rated program consultants higher on influence than did separate school teachers of three to ten years experience. Program consultants were perceived to be more influential with primary and junior grade teachers than with those teachers of intermediate grades. Female teachers perceived program consultants to be more influential than male teachers perceived them.

SUPERVISORY ROLES WHICH INFLUENCE TEACHER BEHAVIOUR
BY NUMBER AND PER CENT OF TOTAL TEACHERS
IN THE SAMPLE

Supervisory Role	Rank (N=556)	Number of teachers rating as influential	Per Cent of teachers rating as influential	Number of teachers rating as non-influential	Per Cent of teachers rating as non-influential	Number of teachers rating the role
Principal	1	519	93.3	37	6.7	556
Other teachers	2	348	62.6	165	29.7	513
Program consultant	3	339	61.0	110	19.8	449
Inspector	4	319	57.4	96	17.3	415
Assistant or Vice-Principal	5	317	57.0	144	25.9	461
Area, district or regional superintendent	6	291	52.3	152	27.3	443
Resource teacher	7	286	51.4	106	19.1	392
Director of Education and superintendent of separate schools	8	275	49.5	259	46.6	534
Persons associated with local teachers' association	9	267	48.0	251	45.1	518
Persons associated with Provincial Teachers' Federation	10	241	43.3	268	48.2	509

Supervisory Role	Rank (N=556)	Number of teachers rating as influential	Per Cent of teachers rating as influential	Number of teachers rating as non-influential	Per Cent of teachers rating as non-influential	Number of teachers rating the role
Persons associated with Colleges of Education and Teachers' Colleges	11	215	38.7	267	48.0	482
Superintendent of Program and Instruction	12	206	37.0	198	35.6	404
Persons associated with graduate school of education	13	189	34.0	279	50.2	468
Regional program consultants	14	184	33.1	301	54.1	485
Persons associated with Provincial teachers' association	15	182	32.7	307	55.2	489
Superintendent of Administration	16	169	30.4	237	42.6	406
Assistant Superintendent of Program and Instruction	17	159	28.6	205	36.9	364
Coordinator of Supervision and Instruction	18	157	28.2	146	26.3	303

Supervisory Role	Rank (N=556)	Number of teachers rating as influential	Per Cent of teachers ratings as influential	Number of teachers ratings as non influential	Per Cent of teachers ratings as non-influential	Number of teachers rating the role
Guidance Counsellor	19	147	26.4	194	34.9	341
Grade or subject chairman	20	145	26.1	194	34.9	339
Regional and assistant regional directors	21	99	17.8	332	59.7	431
Provincial area superintendents	22	86	15.5	365	65.6	451
Other roles in the school	23	22	4.0	23	04.1	45
Other roles in the school system	24	9	1.6	11	2.0	20
Other roles in the regional office of the Department of Education	25	3	0.5	27	4.9	30
Other roles in the professional organizations	26	0	00	22	4.0	22
Total		556				

(4) The Inspector

Fifty-seven per cent (319) of the teachers in the sample (556) or seventy-seven per cent of teachers for whom the role applied (415) identified the inspector as influential. Three factors related to teachers' perceptions of the inspector's influence were: type of school, type of board, and grade level taught. Separate school teachers perceived the inspector to be more influential than did public school teachers. The inspector was perceived to be more influential with teachers under city boards than with teachers under county boards, and teachers at junior grade levels perceived the role of inspector to be more influential than did teachers of primary and intermediate grades.

Generally, inspectors were perceived to be most influential with separate school, female, city teachers with one year professional preparation, ten years or more teaching experience and teaching at the junior and primary grade levels in a medium-size school.

(5) Assistant or Vice-principal

A total of 317 teachers or 57 per cent of those in the sample, or 68.8 per cent of the 461 teachers for whom the role applied, identified the vice-principal as influential. The type and size of school and the grade level taught by the teacher were related to teachers' perceptions of the vice-principal's influence. Public school teachers rated vice-principals higher on influence than did separate school teachers while the vice-principal's influence increased with size of school and grade level taught. When the variables of sex, type of board, size of school, grade level taught teaching experience and professional preparation were controlled, it was found that the teacher most likely to rate the vice-principal high on influence was a male or female who was employed with a public city school board, taught at senior grade levels in a medium or large size school and had two to three years of professional training.

(6) Area, District or Regional Superintendent

Two hundred and ninety-one teachers or 52 per cent of the 556 teachers in the sample or 66 per cent of the teachers for whom the role applied identified the area, district or regional superintendent as influential. The factors related to teachers' perceptions of the influence of this role were type of board, size of school, and teaching experience. Area, district or regional superintendents were perceived by teachers under county boards as more influential than they were perceived by teachers under city boards; the smaller the school the greater the perceived influence of area, district, and regional superintendents; of the three teaching experience groups of teachers, those with three to ten years of experience found this role the least influential.

Altogether, the area, district or regional superintendent was perceived to be most influential by county, female, primary, beginning (less than three years), and experienced (over ten years) teachers with two to three years professional training. Female county teachers perceived the area, district or regional superintendent to be more influential than did female city teachers. Primary grade teachers in large county schools rated the area, district or regional superintendent higher on influence than did their counterparts in large city schools. Those teachers in the county with more than ten years teaching experience rated their superintendent higher on influence than did teachers in city schools with similar teaching experience. County teachers with two to three years of professional preparation rated the area, district or regional superintendent higher on influence than did city teachers with two to three years of professional preparation.

(7) The Resource Teacher

Two hundred and eighty-six or 51 per cent of the total number of teachers in the sample or 73 per cent of the teachers for whom the role applied identified the role of resource teacher as influential. The only factor related to teachers' perceptions of the influence of this role was grade level taught. Teachers at the primary and junior grade levels perceived the resource teacher to have more influence on the teachers' behaviors than did those at the intermediate grade level.

Summary

Of the twenty-six considered the supervisory roles perceived by teachers as the most influential in affecting their behavior with respect to the content, processes or outcomes of their teaching were those of principal, 'other teachers', program consultant, inspector, assistant or vice-principal, area, district or regional superintendent, and the resource teacher. Of these, the most influential was the principal. 'Other teachers' were perceived to influence the behavior of beginning teachers. Program consultants were perceived to be most influential by primary and junior grade, female, public school teachers. Inspectors were perceived to be most influential by separate, female, city teachers with one year professional preparation, ten or more years teaching experience and teaching at the junior and primary grade levels in medium-size schools. Vice-principals were perceived to be most influential by public, city school teachers with two to three years professional training and teaching intermediate grades in medium- or large-size schools. The area superintendent was perceived to be most influential by county, female, primary grade teachers with two to three years professional training with less than three and more than ten years experience and teaching in large schools. Resource teachers were perceived to be most influential by teachers at the primary and junior grade levels.

From this analysis of influential supervisory roles two important questions followed:

(1) How effective are these influential roles in helping teachers in regard to the content, processes, and outcomes of their teaching?

(2) What styles and behaviors do effective supervisors use?

The answer to these questions will be given in subsequent papers.